

## Document Citation

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Appunti per una Orestide africana: A trip to Tanzania and Uganda. Pasolini made the documentary for Italian television. It was sponsored by Angelo Romano, his friend from Officina days\*, who in the meantime had become a television program director. Pier Paolo traveled with camera in hand. He searched black Africa, singled out characters and places, and combined contemporary materials (wars, revolts, massacres)-- he improvised a shred of story.

When the film was finished, Moravia asked himself: "Why has Pasolini abandoned the realism of his novels and early films?" His answer was: "Perhaps Pasolini has tried to avoid forced interpretations, forged by the practical necessities of political action, by shifting himself to a more ambiguous level." And again: "The simplest explanation is that in Pasolini the intermediary of culture is now a poetic necessity." Which is to say that in Pasolini's inspiration reality had lost its clout-- and culture remained.

The cascade of jewels that clothes Medea-- a grim and animal sensuality. The Furies-- the Furies dominate Medea's mind, just as they dominated the mind of Electra in Pilade. But what are the Furies? The Furies, in the Orestide africana, were the monstrous, anthropomorphic roots of the giant trees of the black continent. Medea suggests these configurations by her load of gems and semiprecious stones, of black and bristling garments...

\* Pasolini was an editor of Officina (Workshop), a bimonthly poetry magazine, 1955-59. Siciliano calls him a "guiding spirit" of the publication.

By the way, Pasolini translated Aeschylus' Oresteia.

Moravia's comments are footnoted to his article, "Oreste a 30° all'ombra," L'Espresso, Feb. 14, 1971.